

Money-Saving Repairs & Maintenance Shortcuts

Have you come up with any unusual money-saving repair methods for fixing farm equipment? What maintenance shortcuts have you found? Have you had any equipment recalled by the factory? Name a particularly tough mechanical problem you've had with a piece of equipment and how you solved it.

These are a few of the questions we asked randomly selected FARM SHOW readers. If you have a repair tip, maintenance shortcut, or other mechanical experience you'd like to share, send details to: FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044 or email us at: editor@farmshow.com.

Mark Newhall, Editor

Kenneth Jones, Leslie, Ark.: "I had trouble with wheelbarrow tires going flat. I tried tubes but they just kept going flat. So I bought a can of foam insulation and drilled 2 holes in each tire and then filled both of them with the foam until it came out the other hole. That was 2 years ago and I haven't had a problem with the tires since."

Charles Matthews, Petersburg, Tenn.: "When I use a piece of rubber or plastic hose to protect hydraulic lines, electrical wiring, air pressure lines or something else that requires abrasion protection, I cut the hose in a spiral pattern rather than straight down one side. Once I get it on whatever I'm protecting, I hold the hose in place with zip ties. The spiral cut makes it almost impossible for the protected item to be exposed."

Dale Rogers, dalecmrogers@gmail.com: "In your last issue (Vol. 39, No. 6), Herman Vander Vos wrote about his problems with push rods in his Husqvarna riding mower bending and breaking. My guess is the sticky engine valves were caused by using stale gas.

"A few years ago I poured 5 gal. of old gas into my 1985 Oldsmobile. The gas didn't smell bad and looked good. I drove about 40 miles the first day. The next morning, when I tried to start it up, a couple push rods bent. I thought it was just coincidental, so I replaced the bent push rods and drove it again. Next time I started up, the rods bent again. So I drained out the gas and put in fresh. No more problems.

"I think the old gas gummed up the valves and when the engine cools down, the valves get really draggy, resulting in bent push rods. The only thing old gas is good for is starting fires or washing off engine parts."

Jim Bowser, Saxton, Penn.: "I use anti-skid tape in short strips on both husking rolls on my cornhead to grip stalks better. These strips, which are normally used on stairs and walkways, can be purchased at any hardware store. Once the strips are applied, they help tremendously with harvest and do not come off."

Another idea Jim has is to color code his tools by size. For example, he takes all his 7/16th-in. wrenches – open end, sockets, nut drivers, combination wrenches – and spray paints them blue. All 1/2-in. wrenches are painted red and all 9/16th-in. wrenches yellow, and so on. "That way, no matter what I'm working on, I can quickly grab the right-sized wrench," he says.

Alan L. Carender, Williamsburg, Ind.:

"I've heard other people suggest this idea and I wanted to say that it really does work. If you have to replace a pressed-in bearing race, you can loosen it up by welding a bead all the way around the center of the race, then allow it to air cool and pull out the race. I have used this method hundreds of times in the last 40 years. I've also used this method on dry sleeves. I use 1/8-in. 6013 rod @ 90 amps or 1/8-in. 7018 rod @ 100 amps."

Jim Stricker, Helena, Ohio: "I have a bunch of plastic fuel cans that originally came with flexible accordian-type spouts, which deteriorated after a few years. I replaced them with 3/4-in. dia. CPVC plastic pipe by



cutting off the flex part of the old spout. I left the base of each spout so I could fit a piece of pipe into it. I cut about 3/8-in. off the end of a pipe fitting and slipped it over a piece of 3/4-in. pipe so I could slip it into the old nozzle stub. I glue that into the old nozzle. Then add a 45 degree "L" and another short pipe and a pipe cap on the end. You can glue the pipe together because the entire assembly will still pivot on the cap. This cheap do-it-yourself nozzle doesn't leak."

David L. Vandevender Sr., Durbin, W.Virg.: "I use a grease gun adapter with a needle point to grease axle bearings on my farm equipment. I drill a 5/32 or 1/8 in. hole in the center of an axle bearing dust cap and grease with 2 to 4 pumps until grease comes back out of the small hole when I stop to check. No need to 'pack' bearings anymore. I also drilled holes in sealed bearings on a 40-year Massey-Ferguson side delivery rake and greased it with the needle point. It's still going strong."

Gary Holland (ladybug06@wildblue.net): "Here are some ideas that have helped me:

"Buy 1-in. foam pipe wrap and cut it to fit over your windshield wipers. It shields them from heat and cold so they don't deteriorate. Just take the wraps off when you need to use the wipers. You'll never buy wiper blades again.

"Save hydraulic lines on your tractors

and other equipment by covering them with insulated pipe wrap. It keeps fluid from cold in winter and heat in summer and prevents rot from sunlight. Most lines can be covered with 3/4-in. wrap, which can be held in place with zip ties.

"Put a strong magnet on your drill press to hold bits. The bits will become magnetized and shavings will adhere to them. Old speaker magnets work well.

"Put another magnet on the drill press to hold the chuck."

Denny Rawlings, Ehrenberg, Ariz.: "When a 12-volt pulsating fuel pump quits working, they will generally pulse in but not release. I figured out I could install a 12-volt turn signal flasher unit in the positive lead to the pump and it will work again. If you want it to pump a little faster, just install a 6-volt flasher unit."



George Burkhardt, San Antonio, Texas: "George came up with the Drain Plug Pro to eliminate the need to touch hot drain plugs or get hot oil on hands when changing oil. You simply loosen the plug and magnetically attach the one-size-fits-all head of the tool.



Then turn to remove the plug. No more dropping a plug into hot oil and it keeps splashing to a minimum. He came up with the tool after many years of changing oil on all kinds of equipment and getting hot oil splashed into his eyes, on the floor, and so on. The tool is sold at Amazon.com and is also available from Snap-on Tools, Matco

Tools, Napa Auto Parts, and many other professional parts suppliers, as well as Sears and Walmart. Sells for \$15.90 on Amazon. Commercial models to fit sockets and other drain plugs sell for more."

Gary Oberg: "My lawn mower is powered by a Briggs & Stratton engine that has a safety cable lever that has to be applied for the engine to start and stay running. When the cable broke, I used a 1/4-in. eyebolt, a 1/4-in. wing nut, and a 5/16-in. coupling nut to make a repair so I



could still start and stop the engine.

"It normally requires considerable force to compress the engine's start-up spring, but with a few turns of the wing nut I can easily start or stop the engine. I tighten the nut to start the engine and loosen it to stop."

Ollie Maier, San Marcos, Texas: "Our air compressor came with a pair of small wheels spaced closely together under the tank, which caused it to tip over sideways on uneven ground.



"To keep that from happening, I installed larger front wheels off an old riding mower. I had to extend the compressor's axle by slipping a 1-ft. length of pipe over each end. Then at the point where the hole was on the axle to hold the original wheel on, I drilled a hole into each pipe and inserted a pin to hold the pipe on and to provide the inner limit for the new wheel. I then drilled another hole near the end of each pipe and inserted a pin to provide the outer limit for the wheel. Riding on bigger wheels

5-Ft. Long Grease Gun Hose Extension

"I often have to work by myself and sometimes have trouble reaching grease zerks on equipment. So I decided to solve the problem," says Tom Lass, Cromwell, Minn.

"I removed the hose from my grease gun, went to a hydraulic hose store, and had them make a 5-ft. hose extension. They fitted a male end to the grease gun and a female end to one end of the original hose so that it could be screwed onto the grease gun. I carry the grease gun in a homemade holster that hangs from my belt."

Lass says that with the original 18-in. long hose he often couldn't get the hose on the zerk and maneuver the grease gun at the same time. However, with the 5-ft. long hose he can reach just about any zerk even if it's located above his head.

He made the holster out of 3-in. dia. pvc pipe. "I glued a cap onto one end, then cut a 1 1/2-in. wide slot all the way down through the center of the pipe and set the grease gun in it. I bent a 1-in. metal strap and riveted



Tom Lass carries his 5-ft. long grease gun hose extension in a homemade holster, made from 3-in. dia. pvc pipe, that hangs from his belt.

it to the other end of the pipe to form a loop that fits over my pants belt."

He paid \$15 for the 5-ft. long hose, including the cap and female ends.

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